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Message Text

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42
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 USIE-00 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 OPR-02 A-01 SY-05 EB-07 SCCT-01

AID-05 OMB-01 TRSE-00 ACDA-05 EUR-12 IO-10 EA-06 /105 W
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O 071130Z JUL 75
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9744

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 9000

FOLLOWING REPEAT BOMBAY 1663 SENT ACTION NEW DELHI INFO CALCUTTA/MADRAS. DTD 7 JUL 75

QUOTE:

BOMBAY 1663

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR PINT IN
SUBJ: POLITICAL SITUATION IN WESTERN INDIA

REF BOMBAY 1647

1. SITUATION REMAINS CALM IN BOMBAY, AND SO FAR AS WE KNOW, THROUGHOUT ENTIRE CONSULAR DISTRICT. ACCORDING TO TODAY'S PRESS, ARRESTS IN MAHARASHTRA HAVE NOW CLIMBED TO 940 WITH FOLLOWING BREAKDOWN: MISA-448, DIR-43, "ANTI-SOCIAL ELEMENTS"-440 AND MIS-CELLANEOUS CATEGORY-9. OUR SOURCES REPORT THAT MOST OF MORE RECENT ARRESTS IN MAHARASHTRA INVOLVE RSS CADRE DOWN TO TALUKA LEVEL. WE HAVE NO CURRENT INFORMATION ON ARRESTS IN GUJARAT BUT HAVE BEEN RELIABLY INFORMED THAT IT WIDELY ACCEPTED IN AHMEDABAD THAT KOLP LEADER, CHIMANBHAI PATEL, WAS ARRESTED IN ALLAHABAD ENROUTE ON PILGRIMAGE TO BENARES. WE JUST HAVE NO NEWS ON DEVELOPMENTS IN MADHYA PRADESH.
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2. IN OUR NORMAL, ROUTINE CONTACTS WITH BUSINESSMEN, JOURNALISTS AND POLITICIANS HERE IN BOMBAY, WE NOTE NEW, MORE AGGRESSIVE TONE OF RIGHTEOUS APPROVAL OF LATEST DEVELOPMENTS ON PART OF CONGRESSMEN AND THEIR SUPPORTERS. UNLIKE PREVIOUSLY, THERE NOW NO TALK, AT LEAST, OF EXISTENCE VOCAL DISSIDENTS WITHIN RULING PARTY. BUSINESSMEN CONTINUE VOICING CAUTIOUS APPROVAL AND THOSE WHO NORMALLY WOULD TAKE ANTI-CONGRESS LINE NOW EXPECTEDLY MORE FEARFUL AND RELUCTANT TO SAY WHAT THEY THINK. IN OTHER WORDS, WHILE CALM PREVAILS HERE, IT BORNE AS MUCH OF FEAR AND UNCERTAINTY AS OF "RELIEF" THAT MRS GANDHI HAS TAKEN STRONG MEASURES TO "RESTORE POLITICAL ORDER".

3. FSL POL ANALYST SUCCEEDED IN HAVING SECOND INTERVIEW WITH CONGRESS MP, V.N. GADHIL, IN POONA OVER JULY 4 WEEKEND. ACCORDING TO GADGIL, DECLARATION STATE OF EMERGENCY, CENSORSHIP AND MASS ARRESTS OF POLITICAL LEADERS WERE DIRECT RESULT OF CRISIS DEVELOPING WITHIN RULING CONGRESS AND GROWING THREAT TO MRS GANDHI'S CONTINUED LEADERSHIP FROM "JAGJIVAN RAM A
O CHANDRA
SHEKAR LOBBY IN ALLIANCE WITH J.P. AND NOT FROM THE OPPOSITION AS SUCH." GADGIL REMARKED THAT MRS GANDHI HAD, IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING ALLAHABAD COURT VERDICT, SERIOUSLY CONSIDERED STEPPING DOWN AS PRIME MINISTER, BUT RAN INTO DEADLOCK DURING CPP MEETING THAT WAS CALLED TO DISCUSS QUESTION OF SUCCESSOR. JAGJIVAN RAM REPORTEDLY OPPOSED MRS GANDHI'S SUGGESTED METHOD OF CHOOSING INTERIM PRIME MINISTER, AND DEMANDED, INSTEAD, THAT CPP BODY VOTE FOR NEW PRIME MINISTER. GADGIL BELIEVES THAT RAM'S OPPOSITION TO HER ON ISSUE OF SUCCESSOR AND SURFACING OF RIVALRY BETWEEN Y.B. CHAVAN AND JAGJIVAN RAM CHANGED HER MIND ABOUT STEPPING DOWN. IN UNGUARDED MOMENT DURING THIS CONVERSATION, GADGIL OBSERVED THAT "RAM IS THE ONLY SENIOR CONGRESS LEADER WITH SOME SELF-RESPECT." WHEN ASKED WHY HE AND OTHERS WHO DIFFER WITH PRIME MINISTER DID NOT SPEAK OUT, HE SAID WITH A SENSE OF UTTER HELPLESSNESS THAT IT WAS A "QUESTION OF SURVIVAL OF INDIVIDUAL PARTY LEADERS." REFERRING TO IMPOSITION CENSORSHIP AND OTHER STRONG MEASURES, HE ASKED "WHO WOULD LISTEN TO ME OR SUPPORT ME, IF I SPOKE OUT?"

4. REFERRING TO SITUATION IN GUJARAT, GADGIL SAID THAT MRS GANDHI
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WILL DO EVERYTHING IN HER POWER TO DISCREDIT AND EVENTUALLY DISSOLVE JANATA FRONT GOVERNMENT. "SHE CANNOT AFFORD TO ALLOW THE FRON TO SUCCEED."
BANE
UNQUOTE.
SAXBE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MARTIAL LAW, POLITICAL SITUATION, ARRESTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 07 JUL 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: KelleyW0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975NEWDE09000
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750233-0822
From: NEW DELHI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750781/aaaacudk.tel
Line Count: 113
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 BOMBAY 1647
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: KelleyW0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26 NOV 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: WITHDRAWN <05 AUG 2003 by ElyME, 3.4.X1, 3.4.X6>; RELEASED <26 NOV 2003 by KelleyW0>; APPROVED <26 NOV 2003 by KelleyW0>
Review Markings:

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US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: POLITICAL SITUATION IN WESTERN INDIA
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, IN
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006